GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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Photograph by Dr. T. C. Lau

FOR FASHION'S SAKE, LOI WOMEN SUFFER A LOT OF RINGING IN THEIR EARS

In the central mountains of Hainan, Loi women wear simple coiffures, but hang pounds of brass rings in their distended ear lobes. Except at festivals, rings are looped over the crown of the head. Fifty-six is the highest number of rings per woman yet reported (Bulletin No. 3).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

French Somaliland Extends Strategic Border

AS NORTHERN Africa echoed to the tramp of mobilizing men, French troops made headlines last month by marching into a strip of land on the northeast coast of the Dark Continent which had been under French ownership once before.

The territory then reoccupied was a region between Italian Eritrea and French Somaliland. Little more than 300 square miles in extent, it was ceded by France to Italy in 1935 under an agreement which the Italians themselves repudiated two months ago.

Holds Key to Trade Lifelines

The area into which the French are reported to have moved has an important strategic location. It commands the southern outlet of the Red Sea at the narrow strait of Bab el Mandeb, between Arabia and Africa. Furthermore, it is directly opposite, and only about 10 miles away from, the British-fortified island of Perim, off the coast of southwest Arabia.

Through the bottleneck of Bab el Mandeb sail the ships of four empires, Great Britain, France, The Netherlands, and Italy.

This narrow strait of such great international importance is the third geographic key, following Gibraltar and the Suez Canal, which unlocks the Mediterranean short cut from Europe to east Africa and the Orient. Its treacherous currents have earned it the name, "Gate of Tears."

French Claim Land on Both Sides of Strait

The reoccupied territory is located on the western shore of Bab el Mandeb at its narrowest point. It is, moreover, just across from another dab of French-claimed land on the Arabian coast, the little peninsula of Sheik Said. This means that French territory, including the bulging shore of French Somaliland to the south, overlooks a strategic portion of the strait.

With the exception of its convenient location, however, the newly expanded border region has little to commend it. It is hot, dry, and sparsely settled. Under a blistering sun, temperatures rise so high that the struggle merely to exist is an endurance test.

Its barren, sandy shores merge, toward the interior, into dry, rocky plateau land with little vegetation. Waterless, except in time of rare rainy-season floods, river beds are usually little more than deep desert ditches. Though the climate is not considered especially unhealthful for white men, the possibility of sunstroke is a constant menace. In fact, one explorer has named the entire region "Hell Hole of Creation."

Arab and Ethiopian Traits Combine in the Dankali

In this northern section of French Somaliland, the inhabitants are largely Dankali, sometimes called "Black Semites" because of their intermingled Arab and Ethiopian blood. Tall, thin and hardy, with hair well buttered against the sun's rays, they have adapted themselves well to the inhospitable living conditions of their harsh arid land.

The Dankali bushman is seldom seen without his long, curved knife. In the uplands he earns a precarious living as nomadic herdsman. Along the coast, fishing is the chief means of livelihood.

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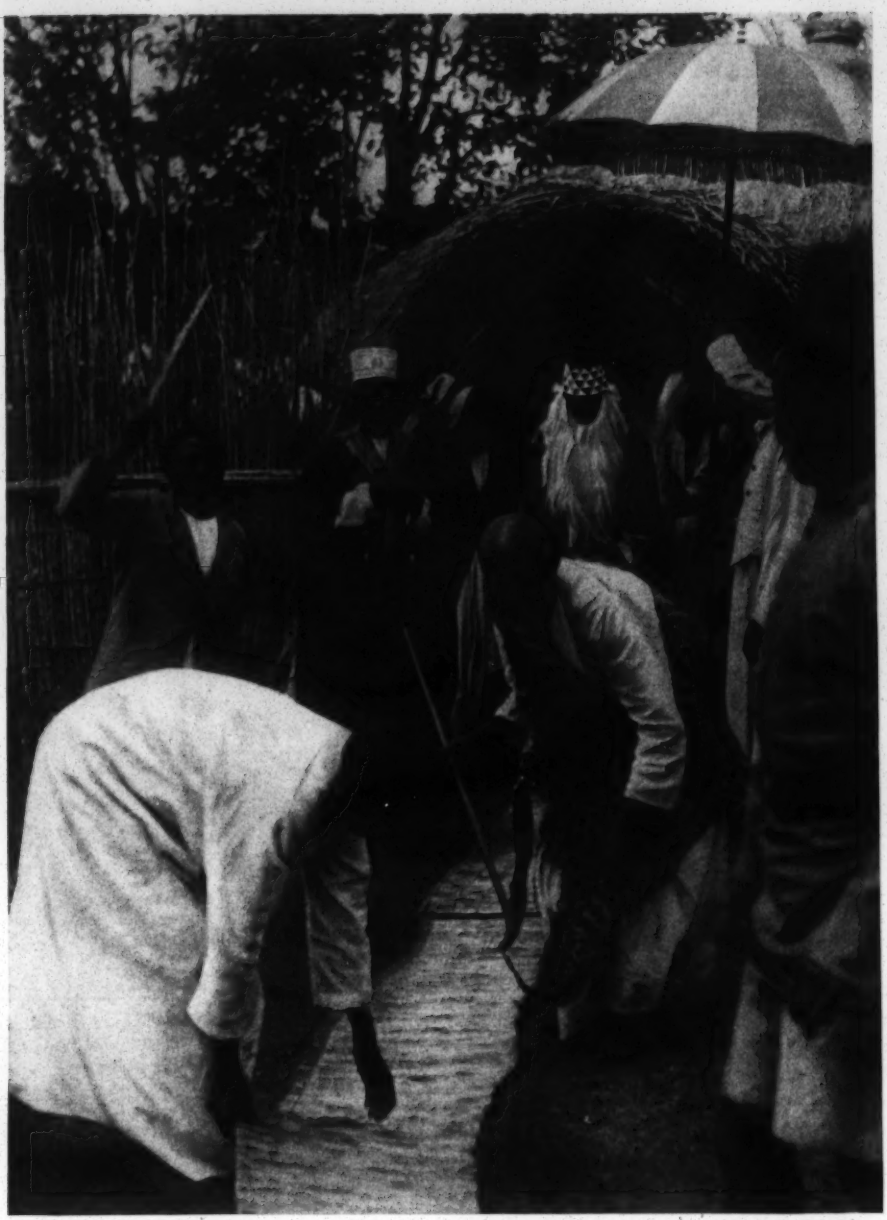

© *A. T. Schofield*

UGANDA'S KING OF TORO IS RE-CROWNED EVERY YEAR

Wearing a beard of colobus-monkey hair, this native ruler is crowned each February during a ritual which includes a parade through seven huts. Toro District, in western Uganda, holds some of Africa's most dramatic scenery. Located in the shadow of snow-covered Ruwenzori (known as the "Mountains of the Moon"), it ranges in altitude from some 2,000 feet to well over 16,000 feet. In this district is found one of the country's largest groups of European planters. Uganda as a whole, however, is still a black man's land, with only about 2,000 Europeans and 15,000 Asiatics among its three and a half million native Negroes (Bulletin No. 2).

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Uganda, Tropical African Colony, Has Elephant Trouble

ARE wild elephants decreasing? Not in Uganda, which is suffering from a surplus of elephants, according to a recent report made by the game warden of this British East African protectorate. Although fifteeen hundred of the big beasts were killed in 1938, elephants continue to be a menace to native crops and smaller settlements.

On the brighter side of the ledger is Uganda's annual ivory yield in tusks, amounting last year to nearly 40,000 pounds. With elephants numbering an estimated 20,000 and human population set at around three and a half million, Uganda has one elephant to every 175 citizens.

Ivory was once the country's leading export. In the early years of the protectorate (established in 1894), this commodity, in fact, made up the only cargo which was worth the heavy cost of caravan transport.

Linked by Air with London in Four and One-Half Days

The Uganda Railway, opened in 1902 to provide an outlet through the Indian Ocean port of Mombasa in what is now Kenya Colony, increased the trade in other products. Uganda's commerce includes exports of hides, skins, rubber, and sugar; and imports of umbrellas, soap, iron roofing, perfume, hardware, and cotton goods.

Today, in an area a little smaller than the State of Oregon, there are some 350 miles of railroads and nearly 7,000 miles of motor roads. Regular air service links Uganda with London in only four and a half days.

As the Protectorate developed, ivory moved down on export lists, to trail raw cotton, coffee, gold, sugar, hides and skins, tin, and tobacco. Cotton is "king" now, representing 80 per cent of total exports.

Many native farmers grow cotton in small family plots, planted with free seeds provided by the government. In the last decade cotton acreage in Uganda has increased from 100,000 acres to more than a million and a half acres. The more densely settled regions of the country are faced with an exhausted-soil problem.

Half a Dozen Brands of Climate

Uganda belongs unmistakably to "Dark Africa." Only about 2,000 Europeans and 15,000 Asiatics live among the three and a half million native Negroes. The non-native group directs government, commerce, and such minor enterprises as raising coffee, tea, and sugar; also mining, engineering, legal practice, and the printing and publishing industries.

Many Europeans are government officials; some are missionaries. Few reside permanently in the Protectorate. For Uganda, despite a fairly healthful altitude, straddles the Equator. Tropical sun rays, monotonous seasons, and widespread malaria do not encourage white colonization.

For years the people were plagued by sleeping sickness, a disease carried by the tsetse fly. The sickness is now controlled, however, by public health measures, which include periodic inspection of persons exposed to the bite of the fly. Communities with too few people to clear encircling underbrush and grass, in which the fly breeds, are being abandoned and their residents moved to larger villages.

Small, compared with many of the continent's territorial giants, Uganda appears on the map as a shoe-shaped area at the foot of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in east-central Africa. Under the arch of the "shoe" is the world's second largest fresh-water lake, Victoria Nyanza. Above it is another expanse of water, Lake

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Sea food is plentiful along Somali shores. It offers the main article of diet for many of the natives, supplemented only by rice, dates, *dourah* (grain of which bread is made), and coffee. Sea slugs, sea snails, and turtles abound along the Red Sea Coast. In the bush, men add to a scanty food supply goats' milk, and an occasional gazelle brought down by expert marksmanship with sling or dart.

Pearl Diving Is Dangerous Job

Among the little islands that dot the Strait of Bab el Mandeb, pearl divers carry on their hard and hazardous occupation. Going out in small boats, they "spot" the pearl-bearing oysters by looking through glass-bottomed boxes; then dive for the prize (illustration, below).

For even the careful pearl diver, the water is full of enemies. Giant clams sometimes catch a diver's hand or foot in a viselike grip only relinquished when the pearler's companion cuts the creature loose from its sea-rock moorings. Sharks too are a menace; and sudden, fierce squalls may carry a fisherman out to sea to die of thirst on the open water.

Still more dangerous activities are followed by the tobacco smugglers and slavers, who, despite modern European restrictions, continue to carry on a small-scale business between Africa and Arabia.

Note: Additional information and photographs of French Somaliland and its people can be found in "Pearl Fishing in the Red Sea," *National Geographic Magazine*, November, 1937; and "Sailing Forbidden Coasts," September, 1931.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Somaliland Is France's 'Railroad Station' Colony," week of January 16, 1939.

Bulletin No. 1, March 13, 1939.

Photograph by Ida Treat

THOUGH THE LAND IS BARREN, THE WATER IS RICH

The coast along the Strait of Bab el Mandeb, where French forces have reclaimed territory ceded to Italy in 1935, is barren and forbidding, but natives reap a rich harvest from the pearl-oyster beds in the adjacent waters. While one acts as boatman, the other inspects the water for a likely spot for a dive, using a water-glass—a plate of glass replacing the bottom of an oil tin. It eliminates reflections on the water surface which prevent clear vision, and makes it possible for the diver to see the ocean bottom as much as 60 feet below.

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Hainan, Chinese for 2,000 Years, Taken by Japan

FIRST important break in Chinese ownership of Hainan Island for more than 2,000 years came with the recent landing of Japanese troops on the tropical island.

Southernmost possession of China, Hainan lies in the Gulf of Tonkin whose shores are formed by the southern part of the Chinese mainland and by the northern part of French Indo-China (map, next page).

Ever since the Chinese conquest of the island's flat coastal regions in 111 B. C., Hainan has been Chinese. There now are more than two million Chinese on the island, but most of them live in the coastal zone.

Still of Little Commercial Value

The mountainous region in the interior is the domain of the Lois, aboriginal tribesmen who have refused to be dominated by outsiders, and have preserved customs they followed before the Chinese came (illustration, cover).

Because of Hainan's lack of modern development, it is of little present commercial value to any country. In its tropical climate coconuts, pineapples, mangoes, bananas, breadfruit, oranges, sugar, and rice thrive, but a comparatively small area of the island has been cultivated.

The forests are rich in hardwoods, including trees of the valuable mahogany family, but there has been no extensive lumbering operation. There are known deposits of gold, silver, tin, and reports of the discovery of copper, lead, iron, and coal deposits. Up to the present, however, Hainan's mining has been done only on a small scale.

Strategic Spot on Map of Nations

Strategically, however, the island is important. It places Japanese forces within 1,500 miles of Britain's new naval base at Singapore. A modern transport airplane could take off from Hainan and land in French Indo-China after an hour's flight; and a flight to Manila would take only about three and one-half hours. In fast battle planes, those times could be halved.

The Loi tribesmen inhabit small villages in the inland mountains, to which they were pushed back by Chinese immigration. Most of the tribesmen have managed to avoid coming under Chinese control.

Tribesmen Retain Old Customs

Loi customs have not changed for centuries. Three blue tattoo rings are worn on their left hands to protect them from smallpox. Charms are generously worn to ward off evil spirits; and the medicine men of the tribe are highly respected as devil chasers.

Like their ancestors, Lois of today do not use hooks when they fish. Instead, they dam a river, pour into the stream poisonous juices from roots, and easily spear the stupefied fish.

Smallpox and malaria particularly are scourges to the tribesmen as they lack any knowledge of treatment other than quarantine.

The Lois are normally friendly to visitors. A reputation for head-hunting has been erroneously given them.

Even in the Chinese-occupied coastal zone, Hainan is far from modern. The towns are not free from epidemics of cholera.

Progress is slowed up by the fact that only small vessels can reach Hoihow, the chief port and gateway to the island from the China mainland, fifteen

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Albert; at Uganda's "toe" is Lake Edward. About 14 per cent of the area of this landlocked Protectorate is open water.

Varied altitudes, rising from barely 2,000 feet to well over 16,000 feet, give little Uganda a half-dozen brands of climate. Moisture conditions vary from the great lake regions of the south and southwest to the dry areas along the northern border. Temperatures range from lowland heat in the valley of the Nile (whose source was finally discovered in this part of the continent) to the mountain chills of Ruwenzori's perpetual snows.

Note: See also "Uganda, 'Land of Something New,'" *National Geographic Magazine*, January, 1937; and "Cairo to Cape Town, Overland," February, 1925.

Bulletin No. 2, March 13, 1939.

CONVENIENT INDEX SUPPLEMENT READY FOR READERS OF *NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE*

Teachers and students who make use of recent issues of the *Geographic* in their class work will be interested to learn that The Society has just published an index to increase the usefulness and reference value of the 24 numbers of the Magazine issued during the years 1937-38. This is a Supplement to the Cumulative Index (1899-1936) for earlier issues. The new Cumulative Supplement contains 1,200 references to topical headings, nature subjects, places, maps, authors, article titles, and photographs. Teachers may obtain the Supplement for 25c, in U. S. and Possessions (elsewhere, 50c).

Those who may not already have their copies of the Cumulative Index may wish to order it, with a 1937-38 Supplement inserted in envelope pocket on back cover, for $1.25 (or $1.50, beyond U. S. and Possessions). Requests for Indexes are sent to the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society.

Photograph by Alice Schalek

DEPARTURE TIME COMES WHEN ALL SEATS ARE FILLED!

Uganda busses wait for capacity loads before starting. Once under way, however, passengers find fairly good roads to take them over much of the Protectorate. First used extensively in marketing cotton crops, motor vehicles now account for most of the highway traffic, with only an occasional ox-cart seen outside the villages. Old safari trails and crude native canoes have also made way for comfortable lake steamers and rail and air services.

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Great Trek Gave South Africa Three States, Second Language

WHAT'S in a name? Too much, if the name is Voortrekkerhoogte, according to a recent decision by the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa.

Last winter's symbolic ox-cart trek across South Africa to honor the Dutch Voortrekkers of 1838 inspired a movement to change the name of Roberts Heights, just outside Pretoria in Transvaal Province, to the Dutch Voortrekkerhoogte. The proposed name, meaning "Hill of the Pioneer Trekkers," refers to the doughty Boers who seceded from English rule a century ago and trekked northward to set up their own republics. The present name of Roberts Heights—an army and aviation base—commemorates Lord Roberts, victorious English general in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) which deprived the Boers of their far-sought independence. To settle this revival of conflicting patriotisms, the Minister was reported in favor of the English name, at least for postal and broadcasting use.

Zulu Massacres of Voortrekkers Like Indian Massacres in U. S.

The Dutch mother tongue of the Boers—now evolved into Afrikaans—is the country's second official language, for the Union of South Africa is a bilingual land. Both Afrikaans and English are used in official documents. Schools teach both. Many periodicals are published with some articles in each language.

Afrikaans was carried northward away from English influence around the Cape of Good Hope a century ago by the Voortrekkers, on the Great Trek which opened up country now included in the Union as the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, and Natal—almost 200,000 square miles. Much like the American pioneer whose Covered Wagon rolled through dangerous Indian country to hit the Oregon Trail, the Trekker packed family and property into a springless "tented wagon" drawn by sixteen oxen, and drove his herds boldly into the unknown realm of Bantu-speaking savages—Zulus and Matabeles. In dogged four-mile-per-hour caravans of a few dozen or a few hundred, eight or ten thousand made their northward exodus to a perilous Promised Land.

The *kakebeenwa,* or covered wagon (illustration, next page), was fortress and home as well as means of conveyance to these Boers on wheels. At night the wagons were outspanned (unharnessed) in a *laager*—parked in a protective ring around the camp fire as a barricade against beast or savage. When attacked, women in the wagons loaded guns, which men beneath then fired through the wheels. Great Trek survivors told of herds of springbok bolting across the trail and sweeping everything before them, and of enraged rhinoceroses that charged at campfires.

Sought Pastures and Freedom; Found Gold and Diamonds

Adventures of these first white settlers of the Union's north are commemorated in many place names. In the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein reveals the dusty Trekker's joy at finding "blooms" and "fountain" (spring). Weenen, in central Natal, signifies "Place of Weeping," where a whole wagon train of Voortrekkers—men, women, and children—were massacred by Zulu hordes of the native chief Dingaan.

The Natal city of Pietermaritzburg recalls Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz, Voortrekker leaders. Retief became a martyr because of Zulu perfidy. With some sixty of his men he went to Dingaan's kraal to bargain for land; they recovered stolen cattle for the Zulu king, in gratitude for which he signed a land grant—then had his sixty-seven disarmed guests slaughtered. Blood River became the

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miles across the Hainan Strait; larger ships must anchor two miles off shore. Outside the towns good roads are unknown. That part of the island's freight which is not borne on the streams is transported in bundles suspended from poles carried by two men or in wheelbarrows or two-wheeled buffalo carts.

Note: See also "Among the Big Knot Lois of Hainan," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1938; and "Landscaped Kwangsi, China's Pictorial Province," December, 1937.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Hainan: China's Largest Island Possession," week of February 14, 1938.

Bulletin No. 3, March 13, 1939.

Drawn by Ralph E. McAleer

HOMELAND OF PRE-CHINESE LONG-HAIRED MEN AND TATTOOED WOMEN TAKEN BY JAPAN

Hainan's occupation by Japanese troops affects more or less the four nations whose territories surround the island: United States, interested because of the Philippines to the east; Great Britain, because of Hong Kong to the north; France, because of Kwangchowan immediately north and Indo-China to the west; and China, whose southern coastline was protected by its southernmost island possession. On a trip through Hainan's interior (indicated by the dotted line), in 1937 a white man passed through 48 villages where his like had never before been seen. The tribesmen of the interior have no international contacts except through their primitive commerce with China: dried monkeys, antlers, and snake skins which they supply for Chinese pharmacists.

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Bermuda's "Royal Residence" To Be Preserved

ROYAL visits to Bermuda are not rare, but the memory of at least one of them has remained so fresh through a century and a half that the temporary dwelling of a prince of the realm has recently been acquired by the Bermuda Historical Monuments Trust.

Royalty in this case was King William IV of England, then Prince William. The house where he lived while stationed in Bermuda as a naval officer stands on Water Street, near the Market Square, in the quaint old town of St. George. The house was built in 1720, a good example of 18th century Bermuda architecture.

St. George, a bit of the Old World set down in the New, has many historic buildings and sites of interest to antiquarian, artist, and photographer. Bermuda's first settlement, St. George was founded in 1612, only five years after Jamestown, and is therefore one of the oldest Anglo-Saxon communities in the New World.

Sir George Died in Effort To Aid Virginia

Narrow streets and winding lanes rise from its quiet waterfront, where gaunt warehouses and crumbling piers recall the days when this was one of the busiest ports in the Americas. A sleepy old town today, St. George has a number of hotels and guest houses that cater to tourists, and its dockyards get an occasional spurt of business when heavy Atlantic storms force tramp freighters and sailing ships to put in there for fuel and repairs. Many waterlogged wrecks, that now dot its blue-green harbor, once limped in to escape the gale and found a final resting place on the coral bottom; only masts and superstructure show above water.

Most famous St. George relic is a white marble tablet in the beautiful Somers Gardens, a public park in the middle of town. It honors the memory of the men for whom St. George was named: "Near this spot was interred in the year 1610 the heart of the Heroic Admiral Sir George Somers, Kt., who nobly sacrificed his life to carry succour to the infant and suffering plantation, now the State of Virginia."

New World's Oldest Anglican Church

Almost equally noted is venerable St. Peter's Church, parts of which date from 1619. It is thus the oldest Anglican religious edifice in continuous use in the New World. The original State House of Bermuda, with walls two feet thick, is now a Masonic lodge hall.

Many visitors to St. George find the search for a vanished dwelling as fascinating as seeing more tangible relics. A short walk up a narrow lane flanked by white walls, old cottages, and flaming hibiscus leads to the site of the home of *Nea,* who in real life was Hester Louisa Tucker, wife of a prominent Bermudian. Tom Moore, the Irish bard, addressed to her his amorous "Ode to Nea."

St. George was also the headquarters of the National Geographic Society-William Beebe Expedition, which in 1934 achieved a world's record dive of 3,028 feet in the bathysphere.

Note: Additional material about St. George will be found in "Happy Landing in Bermuda," *National Geographic Magazine,* February, 1939, The Society's most recent survey of the well-known vacation isles. Other references are: "A Half Mile Down," December, 1934; "Depths of the Sea," January, 1932; "A Round Trip to Davy Jones's Locker," June, 1931; and "The Islands of Bermuda," January, 1922.

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name of the Natal stream that ran red with Voortrekker vengeance ten months later, on Sunday, December 16, 1838. Four hundred Boers, barricaded in a *laager* of ox-wagons with gaps blocked by thorn branches, matched rifles against the spears of ten thousand of Dingaan's Zulu fighters, and broke the treacherous native ruler's power. Their leader was Andries Pretorius; the Transvaal's capital is now Pretoria.

Anniversary of the Bloody Sunday when Dingaan was routed has been celebrated ever since under the grim title of Dingaan's Day. Its centenary last December was the climax of a nation-wide observance centering around a reenactment of the Great Trek. Creaking covered ox-wagons, carrying bearded men and demure women in the capacious *kappies* (sunbonnets) of an earlier day, lumbered again over the trekpad (path of the Trekkers) from Cape Town to Pretoria, 1,000 miles north.

The original settlers of South Africa, having come in 1652 to colonize the shore of Table Bay near the hippopotamus swamp, the Dutch became also the first permanent settlers north of the river Vaal, in what is now the Union's second largest province, Transvaal. They opened up the region of the fabulously rich gold mines of the Witwatersrand. They found industrial "gold" as well—coal, iron, copper, tin, and asbestos. There is also a giant crater from which men have blasted tons of diamonds—the famous Premier Mine.

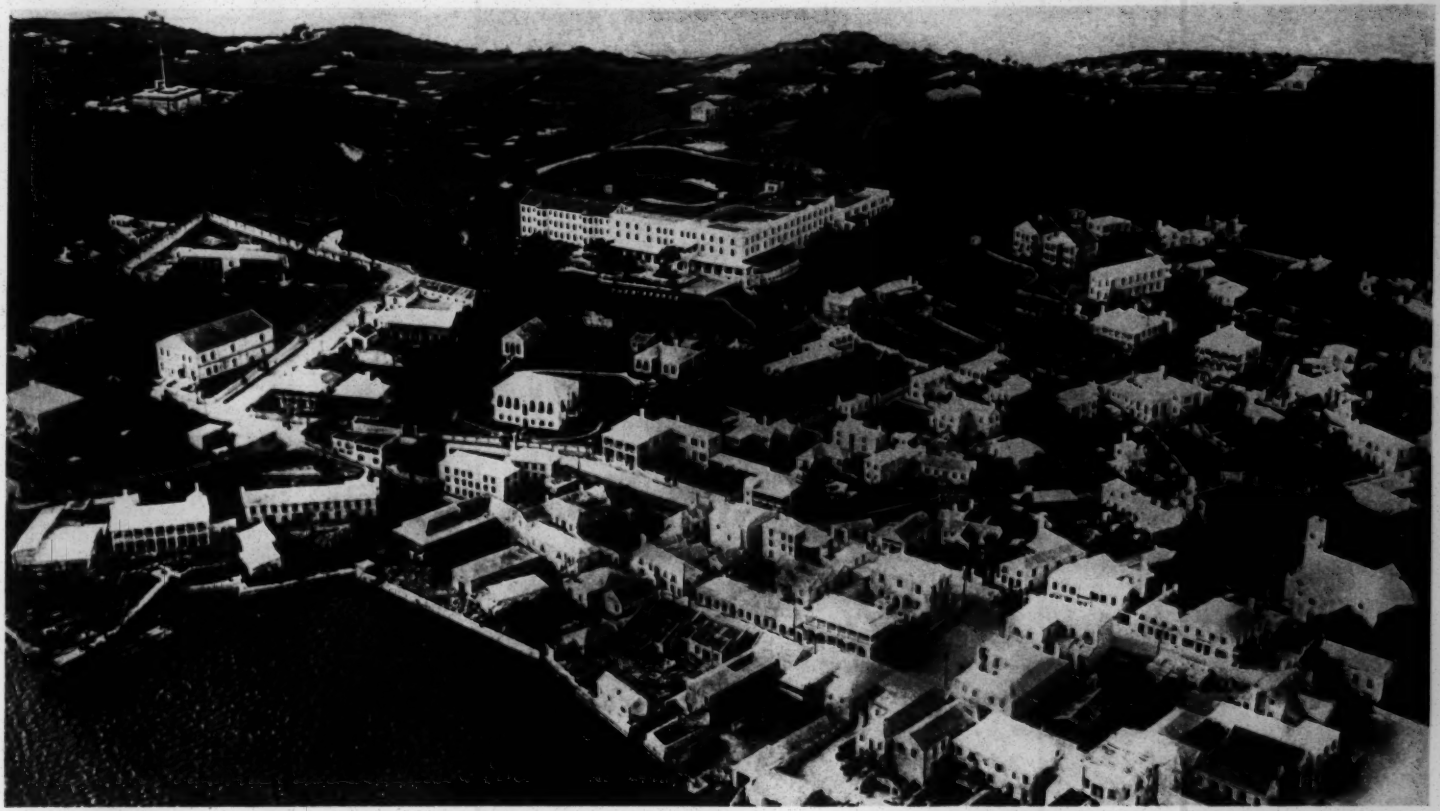
Note: A comprehensive survey of the Union of South Africa, entitled "Under the South African Union," accompanied by 99 black and white and 38 color pictures and a 2-page map, appeared in the April, 1931, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*. Additional material about the Union is found in "Men and Gold," April, 1933; and "Cairo to Cape Town, Overland," February, 1925.

Bulletin No. 4, March 13, 1939.

Photograph by Melville Chater

***KAKEBEENWA* IS AFRIKAANS FOR "PRAIRIE SCHOONER"**

South Africa's Voortrekkers made their Great Trek in covered wagons similar to those which later carried enterprising Americans across the United States prairies. "Wa" in the Afrikaans speech of the Voortrekkers and their descendants means "wagon"; the rest of the name means "jawbone." Today 100,000 ox wagons are still in use in South Africa. Now one costs about as much as an automobile. This old relic, with ironwood frame and wooden shafts for the sixteen-oxen team guided by the famous giraffe-skin whip, is in the Voortrekker Church of the Vow at Pietermaritzburg, Natal—now a museum. Spokes of both big and little wheels flare outward and help protect the hub from getting mired. A half-dozen hand-hewn sections were fitted together to make each wheel rim.



Photograph from Bermuda Trade Development Board

FROM THE AIR ST. GEORGE IS A MOSAIC OF WHITE COTTAGES, BLUE SEA, AND GREEN GARDENS

Bermuda's first capital slopes upward from the harbor (left) to the bastions of old Fort George (upper left). The latter now houses the Government Meteorological Station, whose weather reports are of vital importance to planes flying the Atlantic. The large building in the center is the St. George Hotel. At the lower right can be seen a corner of Market Square and the square tower of St. Peter's Church.